

Message Text

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 01 ATHENS 04068 180902Z
ACTION INR-10

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 IO-13 ISO-00 CIAE-00 NSAE-00 /036 W
-----013559 190526Z /14

R 171559Z MAY 78
FM AMEMBASSY ATHENS
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 5873
INFO AMEMBASSY ANKARA
AMEMBASSY BONN
AMEMBASSY BRUSSELS
AMEMBASSY COPENHAGEN
AMEMBASSY DUBLIN
USMISSION GENEVA
AMEMBASSY THE HAGUE
AMEMBASSY LISBON
AMEMBASSY LONDON
AMEMBASSY LUXEMBOURG
AMEMBASSY MOSCOW
AMEMBASSY NICOSIA
AMEMBASSY OSLO
AMEMBASSY OTTAWA
AMEMBASSY PARIS
AMEMBASSY REYKJAVIK
AMEMBASSY ROME
USMISSION USNATO
USMISSION USUN NEW YORK

C O N F I D E N T I A L ATHENS 4068

BRUSSELS FOR USEEC

E.O. 11652: XGDS-4
TAGS: PINR, GR
SUBJECT: BIOGRAPHIC SKETCH ON GREEK FOREIGN MINISTER RALLIS

1. GEORGE RALLIS, NAMED FOREIGN MINISTER ON MAY 10, IS A VERY WELL
KNOWN POLITICAL FIGURE WITHIN GREECE WHERE HE HAS HELD A VARIETY
CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 02 ATHENS 04068 180902Z

OF IMPORTANT GOVERNMENT POSITIONS SINCE HIS ELECTION TO PARLIAMENT
IN 1950. HOWEVER, HE IS A RELATIVELY OBSCURE FIGURE ABROAD, AND
HIS BACKGROUND IN FOREIGN AFFAIRS IS INDEED LIMITED. HIS APPOINT-
MENT TO THE MFA IS LARGELY A CONSEQUENCE OF HIS LONG-TIME CLOSE
RELATIONSHIP WITH CARAMANLIS AS BOTH COUNSELOR AND CONFIDANT.
CARAMANLIS, WHO ESSENTIALLY ACTS AS HIS OWN FOREIGN MINISTER,
WANTS TO KEEP RALLIS READILY AVAILABLE AND MAINTAIN HIM IN A

POSITION OF HIGH VISIBILITY. SINCE ADDRESSEE POSTS MAY BE SEEING MORE AND MORE OF RALLIS IN THE COMING MONTHS, THE FOLLOWING BIOGRAPHIC SKETCH MAY BE OF USE.

2. RALLIS HAS BEEN A CLOSE COLLABORATOR OF PRIME MINISTER CARAMANLIS SINCE THE EARLY 1950'S. FROM A TRADITIONAL FAMILY OF THE GREEK ESTABLISHMENT, RALLIS IS CONSERVATIVE IN BOTH THOUGHT AND ACTION. PRO-WESTERN IN A GENERAL SENSE AND STAUNCHLY ANTI-COMMUNIST, HE HAS, NEVERTHELESS, ON OCCASIONS BEEN CRITICAL OF THE U.S. HE OPENLY OPPOSED THE 1967-74 MILITARY JUNTA (FOR WHICH HE WAS TWICE IMPRISONED) AND MADE CLEAR HIS DISAGREEMENT WITH AMERICAN POLICY DURING THAT PERIOD BECAUSE HE VIEWED IT AS SUPPORTIVE OF THE JUNTA. TODAY, HE IS CRITICAL OF THOSE ASPECTS OF AMERICAN POLICY WHICH HE CONSIDERS ARE PRO-TURKISH.

3. IN MANY RESPECTS, RALLIS IS A POLITICIAN'S POLITICIAN. HE IS EXTREMELY POPULAR AMONG HIS COLLEAGUES IN THE NEW DEMOCRACY PARTY WHERE HE COMMANDS CONSIDERABLE RESPECT. AT TIMES HE GIVES THE IMPRESSION OF BEING ABRUPT AND AUTHORITARIAN. THOSE WHO KNOW HIM CLAIM THAT HIS GRUFF VOICE AND APPARENT STANDOFFISH MANNER BELIE AN INNER WARMTH WHICH SEEMS TO COME FORTH BEST WHEN RALLIS IS IN SMALL GROUPS. HE EXPRESSES HIS OPINIONS SUCCINCTLY AND DIRECTLY. HE HAS A REPUTATION FOR PRAGMATISM, SOUND POLITICAL JUDGMENT, AND ABOVE ALL FOR DECISIVENESS.

4. RALLIS COMES TO THE MFA FROM THE KEY ECONOMIC MINISTRY OF CO-
CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 03 ATHENS 04068 180902Z

ORDINATION OVER WHICH HE PRESIDED DURING THE PAST FIVE MONTHS BUT WHERE HE NEVER REALLY ESTABLISHED HIMSELF. THROUGHOUT HIS ALMOST THREE DECADES IN PUBLIC SERVICE HE HAS BEEN CONCERNED PRIMARILY WITH GREEK INTERNAL AFFAIRS, HAVING NEGLIGIBLE EXPERIENCE IN FOREIGN POLICY MATTERS. HE HAS BEEN MINISTER OF PUBLIC WORKS AND TRANSPORT (1956-58), INTERIOR (1961-63), PUBLIC ORDER (1967), AND SEVERAL TIMES HAS SERVED AS MINISTER TO THE PRIME MINISTER WHICH IS THE TOP ADVISORY JOB TO THE PRIME MINISTER. PRIOR TO HIS APPOINTMENT TO THE COORDINATION MINISTRY IN LATE 1977, RALLIS SERVED AS BOTH MINISTER TO THE PRIME MINISTER AND MINISTER OF EDUCATION IN THE EARLIER CARAMANLIS GOVERNMENT (1974-77).

5. IN HIS OWN RIGHT, RALLIS HAS BEEN A HIGHLY SUCCESSFUL POLITICIAN. HE HAS BEEN ELECTED TO PARLIAMENT FROM THE ATHENS DISTRICT CONSECUTIVELY SINCE 1950, EXCEPT FOR THE 1958 ELECTIONS WHEN HE SPLIT TEMPORARILY WITH CARAMANLIS ON A POLITICAL ISSUE. HE FREQUENTLY FINISHED NEAR OR AT THE TOP AS A VOTE-GETTER IN THE ATHENS AREA, ALTHOUGH IN THE LAST ELECTIONS HE SUFFERED WHAT FOR HIM WAS A STUNNING SETBACK AND JUST MANAGED TO BE ELECTED. THAT CARAMANLIS KEPT HIM ON IN THE CABINET IS INDICATIVE OF THEIR CLOSE PERSONAL RELATIONSHIP. RALLIS HAS PUBLICLY ADMITTED HIS OWN MONARCHIST SENTIMENTS, BUT SINCE 1974 HAS BEEN A STALWART IN THE

PRESENT REPUBLICAN GOVERNMENT.

6. BORN IN ATHENS ON DECEMBER 26, 1918, RALLIS GRADUATED FROM ATHENS UNIVERSITY LAW SCHOOL IN 1939. HE SERVED IN THE GREEK ARMY 1940-46. BOTH HIS GRANDFATHER AND FATHER WERE PRIME MINISTERS (HIS FATHER, HOWEVER, WAS SHOT FOR COLLABORATING WITH THE GERMANS DURING WORLD WAR II), A POSITION TO WHICH HE UNDOUBTEDLY ASPIRED. FOR SEVERAL YEARS HE WAS CONSIDERED AMONG THE LEADING CONTENDERS TO SUCCEED CARAMANLIS, BUT HIS POOR SHOWING IN THE LAST ELECTIONS HAS DEALT A SEVERE SETBACK TO THIS HOPE.

7. IN 1950 RALLIS MARRIED LENA VOULTSOU WHO IS HERSELF A VERY STRONG-WILLED AND OUTSPOKEN WOMAN. THEY HAVE TWO DAUGHTERS, ONE OF WHOM RECENTLY MARRIED THE SON OF FORMER FOREIGN MINISTER
CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 04 ATHENS 04068 180902Z

PAPALIGOURAS. BOTH RALLIS AND HIS WIFE ARE ATHLETICALLY INCLINED, AND ARE ENTHUSIASTIC GOLFERS. RALLIS SPEAKS MODERATE ENGLISH AS WELL AS FAIR FRENCH AND GERMAN. HE HAS VISITED WIDELY IN WESTERN EUROPE AND TRAVELLED TO THE U.S. AS LEADER GRANTEE DURING THE 1950'S. MCCLOSKEY

CONFIDENTIAL

NNN

Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 jan 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: CABINET, BIOGRAPHIC INFORMATION, PERSONNEL APPOINTMENTS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 17 may 1978
Decaption Date: 01 jan 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 20 Mar 2014
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1978ATHENS04068
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: X4
Errors: N/A
Expiration:
Film Number: D780210-0709
Format: TEL
From: ATHENS
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1978/newtext/t19780552/aaaabrhn.tel
Line Count: 141
Litigation Code IDs:
Litigation Codes:
Litigation History:
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Message ID: d0313e9c-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Office: ACTION INR
Original Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 3
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: n/a
Retention: 0
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 04 may 2005
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review Media Identifier:
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
SAS ID: 2671768
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: BIOGRAPHIC SKETCH ON GREEK FOREIGN MINISTER RALLIS
TAGS: PINR, GR, (RALLIS, GEORGE)
To: STATE USEEC
Type: TE
vdkgvwkey: odbc://SAS/SAS.dbo.SAS_Docs/d0313e9c-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Review Markings:
Sheryl P. Walter
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
20 Mar 2014
Markings: Sheryl P. Walter Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 20 Mar 2014